

43 Bank St East
Emerald Hill, Melbourne
16 January 1877

My dear Andrew,

You will receive this by the hands of our mutual friend Thos Frodsham Junr. who has been paying a visit to Melbore & has been staying with me. I need hardly say that I was very glad to see him & that his stay here formed a very pleasant break in the monotony of my existence, serving as it ^{did} need to recall some of the pleasantest phases in my beloved existence; - it need hardly be added, that I refer to my intimacy with yourself; - an intimacy that had an influence upon me that can never entirely fade away.

My dear friend! I feel that I am insensibly losing my claim to be called your friend. I should say that I feel, nay know, that you are beginning or have already begun to doubt

me to question my right to enrolle
in the list of your chiefest friends—
doubtless, nothing I can say can remove
that impression, but it at least affords
me a melancholy pleasure to enter a
protest against your verdict. You are
right & yet wrong— You will never
wholly understand me. I am the same as
of yore but yet ~~so~~ changed— Do you
remember a long letter I wrote you more
than two years ago (from Sansone
Terrace)? If not, turn to it again,
& believe me that my sentiments are the
same as therein expressed, rendered ~~stronger~~
stronger by the lapse of time— I try to
say this as soberly as I can & to avoid
any appearance of exaggeration ~~in this~~
I am in my ~~own~~ usual temper— a
state of indifference, bordering on sadness—
but I muster up some of the old En-
thusiasm as I think of the past— You
will be, I trust, pleased to hear that
I had always set your example clearly
before me & ~~as~~ moulded my life for
the last 12 months in to your wishes
to an extent that would surprise you—
Although I cannot say that my faith is
any firmer than of old, or that my
character has acquired any fresh stability

Still it has been softened & perhaps
refined. Anyhow I trust so - I
am, I believe, one of the most miserable
beings on the face of the earth at the
present time, - and I deserve it my
fate - But nothing goes ~~wrong~~ well with
me - the present is black enough but the
future far blacker - whichever way I
turn fresh difficulties stare me in the face
& my social & domestic affairs are simply
- hell!

Forgive me for writing in this strain -
I can't help it - This is the only apology I
can make for my disgraceful negligence as
a correspondent - Letter writing (other than
journal) is torture & as I have long since lost
the power of deceiving myself & of fancying
that things will mend, I avoid it as
much as possible - Nevertheless, with selfish
inconsistency, I will ask you not to tire
in your kindness, but let me hear from
you when you can spare the time -

You are now upon the eve of your
examination & I question very much if any
one has followed your progress with more
interest or awaits more eagerly the pleasure
of learning that distinction has crowned ^{than myself} your
efforts. Now I wish I were with you
now - how sorry ^{that} I ever left the one
place where I was happy & the only friends
whose society was an honourable pleasure.
You know I am crowded in a wretched

I have read & corrected this many times & feel strongly tempted to tear it up & send a verbal message in the wind. But let it go - Another effort would but have the same termination - I dare well! Ever yours affectionately

~~read~~ vein, & you will I am sure not
judge harshly those ^{who} ~~you~~ have not had the
good fortune to inherit your firmness
of will & nobility of character - you will,
too, acquit me of any selfish thought in
writing as I do, - indeed I have lost
the energy of hypocrisy, & would not take
the trouble to write anything I did not
strongly feel -

You are puzzled, a little pained, &
perhaps a trifle sceptical as to the sincerity
of all this - you believe I am comfortably
settled here, & that this effusion is simply
the growl of an undeserving, half-
hearted, trifler - But, my dear Andrew,
you don't know & you never will know,
my true position & did you know the real
true state of affairs & the dispiriting nature
of the prospect that awaits me everyday
you might be inclined to judge me, less harshly.
But I have said enough & too much - a good
half ashamed of the lengths to which I
have gone - I would destroy this did I imagine
that I could ~~so~~ write differently, but I
cannot & throw myself on your sympathy.

I am much bothered ^{troubled} with an offer
I am expecting to receive to go to N. S. W.
but I'll be able to let you know the result very soon.
Then again I have not lost sight of any chance
opening in Tasmania - There appears to be a fair
prospect for a criminal lawyer there - but this is
mere conjecture - Write me as soon as you can. I shall
be leaving this adobe at the end of the month, but
you can always get my address at my brother's office.
Please remember me most affectionately to William, also
to every one you see here; & Fred; Hall; & others.